

Oakland Industrial Lands Focus Group 2

OCTOBER 26, 2022, 2:30 PM- 4:00 PM

Held via Zoom, meeting facilitated by Alison Moore and Rajeev Bhatia of Dyett & Bhatia

Participants

- Schnitzer Steel
- Jobs and Housing Coalition
- Impossible Foods
- Ace Makerspace
- Bay Area Air Quality Monitoring District (BAAQMD)
- Circuit Launch
- West Oakland Indicators Project (WOEIP)
- City of Oakland Business Development
- Pacific Merchant Shipping Association
- Oakland Planning and Building
- Port of Oakland
- Prologis
- TGS
- AB Trucking
- CBE
- Prologis
- SSA Terminal
- Economic & Planning Systems (EPS)

DISCUSSION GUIDE

- **Industrial Lands.** In the future, what type of industrial land uses do you envision in different parts of Oakland?
- **Opportunities for Equity.** What opportunities do you see to reconcile the future of industrial land with environmental justice issues? What are the challenges, and how can the City work to overcome them?
- **Needed Changes.** What type of changes are needed to accommodate the type of industrial land use you would like to see in Oakland in the future?
 - Zoning reforms
 - Building improvements
 - Infrastructure improvements
 - Public realm improvements
 - City services, programs, or partnerships

SUMMARY

Key topics in the 2nd Industrial Lands Focus group included the need to establish clear boundaries between industrial and residential land uses and for better code enforcement throughout the City, as well as clarity about the City of Oakland's goals for the Port, the types of industries the City wants to attract and how the City will continue to address impacts to air quality.

Several participants identified that the boundaries between industrial and residential land uses are currently unclear and a common concern in the discussion was that industrial land is being encroached upon by residential development. There was concern that live/work development was used as an avenue for developers to create more residential development in cheaper industrial lands. Participants also identified the need for a better code enforcement program in industrial lands, suggesting that City code enforcement seemed inconsistent.

Participants also expressed frustration at the lack of clarity from the City regarding its goals for the Port. Participants suggested that while the Port was planning for future growth, the City had not confirmed that continued Port growth was a part of its vision for Oakland. Participants also agreed that the General Plan was a good opportunity to discuss the makeup of the industrial lands and clarify the City's vision and guiding principles for industrial lands and building conflicting uses.

Participants mentioned the need for roadway improvements in industrial areas and discussed the importance of connectivity for Port users. Participants also debated about the role of freight for Port users, suggesting that it was a smaller component of Port logistics than previously assumed. Participants connected with the trucking industry commented that truck parking at the Port is limited, causing trucks to park far away from the Port and take further, more polluting trips to deliver and receive cargo.

Additionally, participants were concerned about the different types of industries that are allowed to exist in Industrial Lands. Several participants expressed concern about the marijuana industry displacing other, more job-dense businesses. Participants also expressed interest in working with local community colleges to train up a local workforce and were interested in industries that could bring middle wage jobs to Oakland.

Several participants mentioned interest in bringing greener industries to Oakland's industrial lands and identifying which green industries could be viable to replace bad actors/excessively polluting

industries that currently exist in industrial lands. Participants suggested that one potential solution would be to amortize bad actors that consistently and disproportionately cause pollution hazards. As the discussion turned toward the Port, participants were interested in strategies to decarbonize or electrify Port terminals and operations. Given the previous conversation about greener industries, one participant suggested locating manufacturing and support industries for electric trucking in Oakland, to conveniently support the electrification of trucking operations out of the Port and create local jobs.

The discussion about greener industries was connected to the group's discussion about improving air quality in industrial lands, and participants suggested that the economic analysis of the Industrial lands should not be separated from environmental justice issues. A participant from the Air District recommended that the Oakland Planning team use their organization as a resource to help inform land use decisions that are being made. Finally, participants discussed the balance between creating job-dense industries in Oakland and meeting Oakland's established climate goals.

DISCUSSION TAKEAWAYS

Middle Wage Jobs / Attracting New Industries

- Industrial Lands study should provide the definition of a middle-wage job.
 - Response from consultant team: "Middle-wage" typically refers to the middle of the wage distribution. As of the first quarter of this year, the median (50th percentile) hourly wage in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties is about \$29.60 or roughly \$60K per year assuming a 40-hour/week, 52-week work schedule.
 - Participant mentioned that middle-wage jobs should be blue-collar jobs that do not require a college degree and that the City needs a list of green industrial businesses that can be incentivized to locate in Oakland."
- Participants want to know the types of green middle-wage jobs/sectors that can be encouraged to replace polluting ones.
 - Participant suggested looking to the Equitable Climate Action Plan (ECAP) "high road jobs" for guidance on the sectors to target.
- Concerns raised re: Oakland losing regional competitions to attract a life sciences campus and a field center for the expansion of the Lawrence National Laboratory (which went to Richmond)
 - What were the conditions that allowed Richmond to prevail? Have conditions changed to make Oakland more attractive?
- Businesses are waiting for a signal from the City to know how to invest and want the General Plan will help clarify what investments and opportunities are worth pursuing.
 - One participant mentioned wanting to use the information presented to help inform their business practices and communicate the implications for future operations. Curious about examples of any positive collaborations between the City and different companies in the past.
 - Impossible Foods has a 1,000 sq. ft. facility that monitors emissions. The food and beverage industry wants to become more involved in the community.

- West Oakland Commerce Association member and business owner in West Oakland mentioned that over the last 4 years his neighborhood has lost 4 businesses that employed many people to cannabis grow operations which employ far fewer people. Participant proposed that the City should track industries that have few employees per acre.
 - Another participant echoed concerns re: the cannabis industry. In their neighborhood, 8-10 businesses have been lost and there are now far fewer employees. Concerned that the City has not been clear about the green zone for these businesses and frustrated with the lack of / unevenly applied code enforcement, especially for heavy polluters.
- Port representative wants to know if City is going to commit to supporting a thriving industrial base and mentioned that they have not seen any work re: tax policy (like SF's favorable tax policy for businesses). How will the City create conditions for industrial sectors to grow? Are we just going to assume that industry is negative and just tolerate it?"
- Participant suggested partnerships with local community colleges that offer certificates that target industries are seeking in employees as workforce strategy. For example, Laney College / UC Berkeley jointly offer a bioengineering certificate program, so the sector to target would be biomedical industry. Are there other similar certificate programs? What are the impacts of those industries? Can we then zone for those uses?"

Port of Oakland

- Industrial Lands study should clarify how it will address the Oakland Airport Business Park, Oakland International Airport.
 - Infrastructure deficiencies need to also address roadways in the City and corridors for heavy-duty trucks."
- Participant concerned that General Plan study does not accurately characterize the Port. Port of Oakland representative echoed that the presented analysis of the Port was simplistic.
- Participant commented about military land received by the Port for expansion.
- Participant involved with Port of Oakland commented that the presented analysis of the port seemed simplistic.
- Public infrastructure related to roads and connectivity is a major issue for Port users. Industrial lands and businesses need to be able to connect to their markets.
- Participant mentioned that the Port has built out rail capacity in Oakland and is hoping to expand in the future.
 - Logistics provider based in the Central Valley mentioned that rail is a very small component in Oakland compared to trucking and is a "non-factor." The Port is landlocked for future growth.
- Participants mentioned that the Port is down because the global economy is down, and it hit Oakland first because Oakland is the largest export port in the country. Oakland was growing by good numbers for several years before this. Need more space to accommodate future growth, "Port shouldn't get squeezed."
 - Participant commented that the environmental piece is important but there are great strides that the Port has made: using hybrid RTG cranes, plugging in ships for shore power, and electrifying what they can on the terminals.

- Participant described how Bay Conservation and Development Commission recently approved cargo forecasts for the region and that Oakland has a particular allocation of cargo assigned to it. Port growth needs to be set within the context of the region's growth.
- Participant with trucking industry urged the Port to commit to truck parking so trucks aren't forced to park on streets or in other cities. Truck parking in Oakland would create less pollution from fewer trips. Participant is supportive of electrified trucks but emphasized that these industries should also be located locally to create jobs. Local facilities to manufacture parts, assemble, and maintain electric trucks could be supported by a workforce training program on truck electrification.
 - Another participant echoed that “the Port has never committed to truckers, and they see us as a stepchild.” They constantly reduce truck parking acreage and truckers need land close to the Port.

Emissions Reductions

- Participant concerned that the cranes used at the Port are not efficient enough to move containers from ships to trucks. The City should be more engaged about why the Port doesn't have a master plan for the electrification of its terminals and why the Port doesn't pay for capital improvements. The City should be more tuned in to what the Port is and is not doing to achieve emissions reductions.
 - Concerns re: the billions of dollars required to electrify the Port (lifts, cranes, trucks, etc.)
 - who has the money? There are concerns that there is not sufficient technology and infrastructure to support 95% electrification of equipment.
- Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) suggested amortization as an emissions-reduction strategy for residential areas near industrial lands.
 - The City should transition some to greener and cleaner industries that offer middle-wage jobs, and the consultant team should identify those opportunities. The worst polluting industries should be amortized. National City has adopted an ordinance of this nature for the City to reference.

Zoning

- Participant mentioned in chat: “There are lots of current loopholes in zoning that allow residential use in industrial land. This is also polluted land not suitable for living on.”
- Participant echoed the need for code enforcement. The creation of a new code enforcement program should be studied as it is sorely needed.
- Participants wondered about criteria for converting industrial land to residential and wanted more opportunity to talk about the vision and guiding principles for the General Plan's industrial lands work, as well as a regional vision, like Plan Bay Area. Suggested a regional plan to get the grants and the infrastructure to make sure the vision is achieved.
- Participant commented that the City encourages live/work which is used by residential developers to encroach into industrial lands. At the same time people complain about smoke and dust and pollution from local business and industrial users, but this is from freeways and people driving to work. “I would like to see a better firewall put up against residential encroachment in industrial lands.”
- One participant discussed wanting to uplift the notion of thinking of where to place heavy industry.

- BAAQMD participant recommended that planning team uses air district and help inform land use decisions that are being made.
- Participant had a potential tenant ask about automotive use in the building for an electrical van conversion company. Participant suggested that new zoning changes need to be made for new automotive green use types.

Next Steps

- Consultant Economic Planning Systems (EPS) commented that “the EPS study isn’t focused on whether something is good or bad, but rather identifying growth opportunities and constraints from an economic perspective.” EPS analysis isn’t as focused on environmental justice component.
 - Participants disagreed and emphasized that the economic analysis needs to consider EJ implications.
- Communities for a Better Environment (CBE) mentioned that there are plans for an Amazon warehouse to replace the AB&I foundry, which CBE strongly opposes, as their goal is to shift away from an extractive economy into a regenerative one that does not continue to pollute and negatively impact communities across Oakland.
 - Participants agree that Amazon would be a huge magnet source of air pollution. Not a green business.
 - Participant from Prologis responded that they are not proposing an Amazon facility at the AB&I Foundry site and to contact them with any questions.
- Participant commented that Oakland needs a comprehensive goods movement strategy, centered in equity, to be a key component of the industrial lands proposal.
- Air District participant suggests that the economic analysis cannot be separated from environmental justice perspective.
- Participant from City of Oakland Sustainability and Resiliency division emphasized getting ahead of decarbonization targets to ensure city meets carbon neutrality by 2045, which means a fully electric transportation system. Participant wants to ramp up technologies like heat pumps and building decarbonization. Emphasized focus on regenerative industries and environmental justice and being very intentional about the kinds of industries we bring to Oakland industrial lands.